Use of satellite phones by passengers

3284. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether satellite phones provided at Zonal and Divisional Headquarters can also be used by railway passengers;

(b) whether this facility is further proposed to be introduced on railway stations also; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) Satellite telephones are being provided with Zonal and Divisional Railway Headquarters exclusively for establishing communication from any accident/disaster site, for use of Railway administration as well as stranded passengers.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Stainless steel coaches in Rajdhani Express

3285. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MISS MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that light weight coaches made of stainless steel offering advanced safety and passenger comfort would be attached to Rajdhani Express trains;

(b) whether these are built by RCF, Kapurthala on technology transfer; if so, details of technology transfer; and

(c) whether these coaches are fire-proof and would eliminate the train burning incidents as had the case of Frontier Mail at Ludhiana in May last?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir. Indian Railways entered into a contract with a German Company M/s Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB, now ALSTOM LHB) in 1995 for transfer of technology for manufacture of light weight, high speed coaches in Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala.

(c) Coaches in the world are manufactured with fire retardant materials which will delay the propagation of fire. Our coaches are also manufactured using non-inflammable material with fire retradant properties in accordance with international practice, thus minimizing the impact of any fire generated in the coaches to the maximum extent.

Inadequate safety

†3286. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government allocate hundred crores of rupees every year for safety and relief work of Railways;

(b) if so, the reasons of inadequate Railways safety inspite of this allocation;

(c) reasons for taking many days and even months together to save stranded passengers/ to take out dead bodies from railway coaches after rail accident; and

(d) details of the steps taken by Government for bringing immediate improvement in all the above matters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA) : (a) Yes, Sir. Ample allocation is made every year for safety and relief work.

(b) The incidence of accidents per million train kilometres has come down from 0.65 during the year 2000-01 to 0.44 during 2002-03. The number of consequential train accidents have shown a decline of more than 25% during the year 2002-03 as compared to 2000-01.

(c) Indian Railways accord highest priority to saving stranded passengers and taking out dead bodies from railway coaches after rail accidents. The work at the site of accidents goes on non stop and officers and staff do not leave the site till:

(i) All the injured are attended to;

(ii) All dead bodies are handed over to Police; and

(iii) Traffic is restored.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.